

Mr. *NEWCOMB*'s  
**SERMON**

Preach'd Before

The **UNIVERSITY**

O F

**CAMBRIDGE.**

MR NEWCOMB'S

FERMON

Presented Before



THE UNIVERSITY

OF

CAMBRIDGE

6  
*The Sure Word of Prophecy.*

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A

# S E R M O N

Preach'd before

The UNIVERSITY

O F

C A M B R I D G E,

At St. *MART*'s CHURCH,

JUNE 24<sup>th</sup>. 1724.

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By *JOHN NEWCOME*, B. D.

Fellow of St. *John*'s College.

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Publish'd at the Request of the VICE-CHAN-  
CELLOR and the other HEADS of COLLEGES.

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C A M B R I D G E.

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The Stone Word of Prophecy

FERMON

Presented before

the UNIVERSITY

of AMHERST

COLLEGE



1784

THE AMHERST

COLLEGE

AMHERST, MASS.

1784

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1784

TO

The very REVEREND,

AND

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

ANDREW SNAPE, D.D.

PROVOST OF KINGS COLLEGE,

VICE-CHANCELLOR;

And to the Rest of the HEADS

of Houses in the UNIVERSITY

OF CAMBRIDGE.

Honoured Sirs,

**I**N Compliance with your Request, which  
has with me the Authority of a Command,  
I venture to Publish an Essay on the Sure  
word of Prophecy, a small Attempt on a  
Great

## DEDICATION.

*Great Subject, which a late Writer has endeavour'd to Ridicule.*

*It was not intended as an Answer to His Grave piece of Buffoonry; but may be look'd upon as a Prelude to that Complete Defence which a very able Hand is preparing.*

*I beg leave to observe, that the Stratagem of our grand Adversary has been uniformly and artfully managed, tho' by under-workers of very different Characters and Abilities. Not long ago some fine Wits of this Party chiefly labour'd to shorten our Creeds, and reduce them to this one, plain, fundamental Article, Jesus is the Messiah. But now we are with much Freedom told, that the whole Story of the Messiah is a mere Jewish Fable, that has no Foundation, but in the Dreams of Enthusiasts, and the wild misapplication of Types and Allegories. This Free-speaker has at length generously discover'd the whole Secret; and with a little Learning and much Malice made Himself*

## DEDICATION.

*Self very merry with Ridiculing Ancient and Modern Writers of the first Character.*

*I must still have some Compassion for that strange want of Taste and Judgment, which hinders any considering Person from loving that Religion, which does so great Honour to Humane Nature; and from feeling the weight of those many Arguments for it's Support, which amount to a Demonstration.*

*I am in no Pain for my self, provided I can do any small Service to this Cause, which I have the Honour to appear in. And the principal Satisfaction I propose, is to engage so Venerable a Body of Divines in the Defence of the Messiah. I consider you, as Patrons of my Argument, which, your Elaborate Vindication of the Christian Religion, your Complete Victory over the Revivers of old Heresies, and the new-moulders of Theology, and your repeated Triumphs over the Free-thinkers, abundantly prove you very Able to Defend and Adorn. And the great Prudence you have shewn in*  
the

## DEDICATION.

*the Good Government of this University, which has been so remarkably distinguished by His Majesty's unexampled Munificence, promises all that Care and Circumspection, which any Controversy can require.*

*If I Succeed in this Application, I shall more readily be pardon'd any mistakes in this imperfect Essay.*

I am,

Honoured Sirs,

Your most Obedient Servant

St. John's.

July 24. 1724.

J. NEWCOME.



## II. PET. I.† 19.

*We have also a more Sure  
word of Prophecy.*

**T**HE Christian Religion is founded on *the Rock of Ages*, and cannot be shaken by the united Force of Infidels and Heretics. In every Age it baffles the Attempts of its Adversaries, and confirms the Promises of our Lord, who has assured us, that He *will be with his Church \* to the end of the World*, and that † *the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

This however has not discouraged a Hardy Writer, and well *known* Enemy, from labouring to undermine one of the strongest Supports of the Christian Fabric. This last Effort

\* Matt. XXVIII. 20.

† Matt. XVI. 18.

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He has made with great Insolence on the *Prophecies* concerning the *Messiah* contained in the Old Testament, and very justly said to be fulfilled in the New; by greatly misrepresenting the Nature of those Prophecies, and endeavouring to weaken the Force and ridicule the Extensive signification of them.

Our unfair Adversary has concealed some of the principal Evidences of the Christian Religion, and divided it's Proofs. The Literal Prophecies, which alone are a Sufficient Foundation of our Faith, he has pass'd over in Silence; and the Typical and Allegorical Prophecies he strives to expose, by pretending to defend them. The great Miracles and glorious Works, which *Jesus* wrought, and to which he so often appeals, as convincing Proofs of his Divine Commission, he arrogantly slights. And in effect represents the whole System of the Gospel, as an Enthusiastic or Juggling Imposture, which has neither Truth nor Strength to support it.

My present Endeavour is to vindicate the Argument for the Truth of Christianity, which is taken from the Prophecies of the Old Testament. And, because the main Purpose of this Writer is to ridicule those which are Typical and Allegorical, I shall chiefly labour to support *them*, and content my self with  
barely

## The UNIVERSITY of Cambridge. 3

barely Mentioning some few of the Literal Prophecies, which he has rejected.

I ground my Discourse on the Words of St. Peter, who had the Honour of being a principal Attendant on *Jesus* in the Course of his Ministry; who saw Him transfigured *in the Holy Mount*, and was an *Eye-witness of his Majesty*; who heard \* *the voice of God the Father speaking from the excellent Glory, This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; and yet, without diminishing the Force of that Divine Attestation, declares, † *we have also a more sure word of Prophecy*, *Βεβαιώτερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον.*

It is not necessary to understand these words in their *comparative* signification; as if Prophecy was *more sure* than the word of God himself; or more Credit were to be given to his Messengers and Interpreters, than to *God the Father* in Person: For nothing is more common among the Greeks, than to use a comparative word for an *absolute* one.

And yet, considering that *this Voice of God* was transient, and heard only by a few Persons, whose relation to *Jesus* was of such a Nature as might occasion in some Men suspicions of Partiality; it may be truly affirm'd, that standing Prophecies of Holy Men in different Ages, agreeing with one another, and

\* Pet. I. 17.

† v. 19.

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Centring all in one and the same Person of *Jesus Christ*, are a *more convincing* Argument, a *more Stable* and permanent Proof, of his being the promised *Son of God*, the Redeemer and Governor of Mankind,

For, since the Actions of Men flow from a Principle of Freedom, and are under the Superintendence of an infinitely wise and all-powerful Providence, it must be granted, that Foretelling the greatest Events, that God or Man are concern'd in, is above the Power of all created Beings; and that \* *Prophecy* could not come by the will of Man, but *Holy Men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. And, if we shall find a Series of successive Prophets, all agreeing in their Characters of the *Messiah*, and preparing the World for his Reception by a Voice, not to be counterfeited; (these Oracles being published to the *Gentiles*, some Ages before his Coming, in the most Universal Language :) We must confess, that *the Word of Prophecy* was *the most Sure*, the most Public, the most Authentic *Word*, that could be spoken to the Sons of Men; and such as will deserve our utmost Attention and Reverence. But if this *Word* should prove Unsuccessful, we shall not wonder, that the Miraculous *Works* of the Son of God have not their due Effect upon the *Scorners* of Divine Reve-

\* 2. Pet. I. 21.

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ation: for \* *if they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, tho' one rose from the Dead.*

In the Prosecution of this Subject, tho' very far beneath its Dignity, I shall observe this method.

I. I will mention several *Literal* Prophecies of the greatest Importance, which relate to the *Messiah*, and were fully accomplish'd in *Jesus*.

II. I will more largely shew, that Typical and Allegorical Prophecies are of great force and *validity*; and moreover, that, in the Question now before us, they are beautiful, useful, and *necessary* methods of *Designation*, and *Illustration*.

III. I will very briefly observe, that the Harmony and Consent of Prophecies, Literal, Typical, and Allegorical, deliver'd by Holy Men of God in different Ages of the World, and of different methods of Life, was the most *complete*, and most *divine* Intimation and Description of the *Messiah*, that could have been given to Mankind.

I. I am to mention several *Literal* Prophecies of the greatest Importance, which relate to the *Messiah*, and were fully accomplished in *Jesus*.

The first, which I shall speak of, is that Promissory

\* Luke XVI. 31.

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missory one, given to *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, \* *that in his Seed should all the Families of the Earth be Blessed.*

This is no Allegorical but Literal prediction of an Universal *Blessing* to be confer'd on the Sons of Men.

And if a Deliverance from Sin and Death (the *Curse* entail'd upon Mankind;) if establishing the most perfect Rules of Morality; if proposing the most divine Example of Life; if promising the greatest Assurances of Grace; if making our sincere Endeavours acceptable to God; if *bringing Life and Immortality to Light*; if these be the greatest Blessings: Then is this Prophecy fully accomplished in *Jesus*.

2, Another Literal Prophecy concerning the *Messiah*, was spoken by the Patriarch *Jacob* on his Death-Bed.

† *The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the People be.*

In this remarkable Prophecy the Time of his Appearance is distinctly foretold, many Ages before the Tribe of *Judah* was in possession of the Regal or Legislative Power.

3. Another Literal Prophecy was deliver'd by *Moses*, near the time of his departure.

† *The Lord thy God will raise unto thee a Pro*

† Gen. XII. 3. † Gen. XLIX. 10. † Deut. XVIII. 15

phet

phet, from the midst of Thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken.

Here is not one Allegorical word in this memorable Prophecy. And tho' some are pleased to understand it of an Order of Prophets, who guarded the Law of *Moses*, and watched for the Honour of God and the *publick* good; (who were sometimes permitted to make Discoveries of future Events in *private* Families, to prevent the consulting Sorcerers and Diviners;) yet it can *literally* and *ultimately* belong to no Prophet, but One who should equal *Moses* in giving Laws and working Miracles; in Privilege with God, and Authority with Men.

That this was the Sense, and such the Expectation, of the *Jewish* Church, we have a remarkable Testimony at the end of *Deuteronomy*, supposed to be placed there after the Captivity.

\* *And there arose not a Prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face; in all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the Land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his Servants, and to all his Land; and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great Terror which Moses shew'd in the sight of all Israel.*

\* Deut. XXXIV. 10, 11, 12.

Well

## 8      *A SERMON Preach'd before*

Well then might *Jesus* refer the *Jews* to the writings of *Moses*; \* *There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*

From hence we may gather by the way, that the doing of many and great Miracles is one essential Character of the *Messiah*, and much to be regarded.

These few Prophecies are taken solely from the Books of *Moses*, and are the Foundation of those numerous and more particular ones, which are to be found in the *Psalms* and the *Prophets*, but would exhaust our whole time to mention.

4. I shall give you but one, out of a great Number, from the Noble Prophet *Isaiah*; who, honoured with the Prospect of God's great Design, cries out, as if the Event was then present, † *Unto Us a Child is born, unto Us a Son is given; and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, (‡ or the Father of the Age to come,) the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom,*

\* Joh. V. 45, 46. † *Isaiah* LX. 6, 7. ‡ Version of the LXX.

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order it, and to establish it with Judgment, and with Justice, from henceforth even for ever.

This Kingdom, so often mention'd by succeeding Prophets, is so strongly applied to Jesus, before his Conception, by the Angel Gabriel, that it cannot be overlooked by a fair Adversary.

If this Prophecy should rather be placed amongst the Allegorical ones, (and none but such our Adversary will allow to be cited in the New Testament,) I shall make farther use of it in the sequel of this Discourse,

5. I cannot pass by that august Prophecy, recorded by \*Haggai; *I will shake all Nations and the Desire of all Nations shall come; And I will fill this House with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Now since, as the Jews acknowledge, several great Privileges were wanting in this latter House, (as the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Shechinah,) which made the former so truly glorious; we may justly contend, that this Prophecy was then solely and fully accomplish'd, when the second Temple was Honour'd with the Divine Presence of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who had the Prophetic ‡ Spirit without measure, and \*\* was the Brightness of his Father's Glory.

\* II Chap. v. 7. † v. 9.

‡ Joh. III. 34.

\*\* Heb. I. 3.

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Lastly, To mention no more, the Prophecy concerning \* *Messiah, the Prince, to be cut off after threescore and two weeks, and the Destruction of the City and the Sanctuary*, is so literal and determinate; that one would wonder how any Man can have the Hardiness to insinuate that the Prophecies relating to the *Messiah* are purely Allegorical.

But, as Justice has been done to this branch of the Argument by several ancient and modern Writers, I pass on

II. To shew more largely, that Typical and Allegorical Prophecies are of great force and *validity*; and moreover, that in the Question now before us, they are beautiful, useful, and necessary methods of Designation and Illustration.

I shall argue first *in general* from the Nature of Types and Allegories, which I beg Leave to lay distinctly before you.

The first time the word *τύπος* occurs in the LXX's Version of the Old Testament is in the Command, which God gave to † *Moses*, *that thou make them after their Pattern (or Type) which was shew'd thee in the Mount*; and the first place I meet with it in the New Testament, is where the doubting Apostle says, ‡ *except I shall see in his Hands the print (or Type) of the Nails — I will not believe.*

\* Dan. IX. 26.

† Exod. XXV. 40.

‡ Joh. XX.

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The former of these is a Type of things *Future*; the latter is a Type of something *Past*.

So that in general, a Type is a lively Impression or Representation of any Thing or Person; it is an Image or Picture exhibiting the Lineaments and Characters of the Original; and there is a strict relation between the Type and the thing Typified, which may be called its Anti-type or Counter-part.

Shadows, Prints, Footsteps, are natural Types; others take their Rise from invention and appointment.

The Divine Ideas are the Original and most perfect Types; and our own are Types of the things without us, and represent the Objects to which we refer them: and the nearer and more perfect such resemblances are formed, the better we apprehend their Nature and Constitution. But Sounds have no likeness to our Ideas; nor Figures to Sounds. So that both of these must be reckon'd mere arbitrary Signs, used by consent, having no natural Relation to the things signified. Whereas Types are the most natural, the most ancient, and the most expressive Language.

Now as a Picture has first its out-lines drawn and Proportions described; and afterwards by various Lights and Shades expresses the apparent eminences and recesses of the surface; and at length

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by nice Colouring and curious Ducts, gives you a lively representation of the Look, Air, and Spirit of the Original: So a Type may be in any degree of resemblance; it may give us an Idea in any point of view, and be more or less expressive, according to the Skill or Purpose of the Designer.

Allegories are *Modes of Speech*, wherein one thing is expressed, and another meant; they are Discourses under borrowed Names and foreign Ideas; they are founded in a sort of resemblance, which may be called compound or proportional. But a single Thing, Action, or Person, may be a Type, and very expressive, tho' nothing should be written or spoken concerning it. Many are the forms of Allegorical Speech; such as *Ænigmas*, Fables, and Parables. But they are so well known, that I shall not dwell upon their Description.

I come now to shew, that Prophecies couched in Typical and Allegorical Terms are of great force and validity, as well as use and beauty.

It is certain, that whatever helps to enliven our Thoughts, and animate our Notions, gives an uncommon pleasure to the Mind, and makes it self more consider'd and better remember'd. For Man employs himself greatly in finding, and framing, and treasuring up resemblances

and lively Images of things. The shortest way of learning Languages, Arts, and Sciences, is by Imitation; and by the same Method is Politeness, good Manners and Religion propagated. One of the greatest beauties in Poetry is apt Similitudes and the metaphorical Dress, that common Notions are cloathed with; and the whole Art, if we will take a great \* Critic's word for it, is founded in Imitation. We love to compare our Ideas, and to find Agreements and Relations: and to be able to represent our Thoughts in such a lively manner as pleases the Imagination, is a Perfection greatly admired and much studied. It gives them Life, Spirit, and Force; and offers such a compass and fullness to the Mind, as engages all our Powers of Attention and Contemplation.

A Prophecy then, especially of great Event and Importance, which is recommended to us in Types and Allegories, can lose nothing by this beautiful, this forcible way of Representation, which is so agreeable to our Intellectual Faculty, entertains our Imagination, and thereby secures a lasting place in our Memory and Affection.

Let us Examine the *fundamental Prophecy*, deliver'd to Man in Paradise, whose Language is in part Allegorical. † *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head.*

\* *Aristot.*

† Gen. III. 15.

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*The Seed of the Woman* is no Allegorical Term, but a general Expression for some descendent of that Woman, and well adapted to one, who should be born without Man's concurrence; it might be very comfortable to that Sex, which was first in the transgression, and defend them from future Reproaches, as well as support them in Child-bearing.

As the Serpent seems well chosen by the fallen Angel, for his natural Subtilty and Address, to be the Instrument of his Temptation; so the Language of the Prophecy, the sentence of Condemnation, is exactly fitted to express his Fraud, and perpetuate the history of his Crime, and the certainty of a Conquest over him.

This must needs be a great support to our first Parents, that God would not desert them, tho' driven from Paradise; and that the Deceiver, whoever he was, should not ruin their Posterity, but have his Policy and Malice defeated, and his Empire overthrown. *The bruising of the Serpent's Head*, wherein his Strength and Subtilty lies, finely conveys the Idea of a complete Victory design'd over the Enemy of Mankind; and cannot possibly be mistaken for a *literal* Promise concerning the *brute Animal*, which would have been small satisfaction to a ruined Species, and unworthy of the Solemnity, with which it is introduced, and the great History of a World  
Created

Created, and Paradise lost; of the Obligations owing to God as Creator, and the Reverence due to him as Judge.

This Allegorical or Typical Prophecy seems to have all the Force and Beauty that Language could give it; and to be well fitted to raise the Expectation of mankind.

In like manner, it is no disadvantage to the other Prophecies concerning the *Messiah*, that he is represented therein as a *Star*, <sup>a</sup> *that should come out of Jacob*; and as a *Sceptre* that should rise out of *Israel*; as one that shall <sup>b</sup> *enlighten the Gentiles, open the Eyes of the Blind, bring the Prisoners out of Prison, and them that sit in Darkness from the Prison-house*; that shall not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax; that in his time <sup>c</sup> *every Valley shall be Exalted, and every Mountain and Hill be made low*; that <sup>d</sup> *the Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid*; <sup>e</sup> *that Righteousness shall be the Girdle of his loins, and Faithfulness the Girdle of his Reins*; that <sup>f</sup> *he is like a refiners Fire, and like fullers Soap*; <sup>g</sup> *that he shall drink of the brook in the way, and therefore lift up his head*; <sup>h</sup> *that he shall arise as the Sun of righteousness with Healing in his Wings*; <sup>i</sup> *that he shall break his Enemies with*

<sup>a</sup> Numb. XXIV. 17.

<sup>b</sup> Isai. XLII. 3. 6, 7, 8.

<sup>c</sup> Isai. XL. 4.

<sup>d</sup> Isai. XI. 6.

<sup>e</sup> 5.

<sup>f</sup> Malach. III. 2.

<sup>g</sup> Ps. CX. 7.

<sup>h</sup> Malach. IV. 2.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. II. 9.

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a rod of Iron, and dash them in pieces like a Potter's vessel; \* that he shall sit at the right hand of God, and make his enemies his Footstool.

It appears from the nature of Types and Allegories, that they are of great Force and Beauty, and very useful to convey to latest Posterity Prophecies of great Importance.

But I shall further endeavour to retrieve them from Contempt, by shewing

1. That Allegories have been much esteem'd amongst Learned and Polite Nations.
2. That great and important Truths were distinctly convey'd in this Method.
3. That the Prophecies concerning the *Messiah*, however Allegorical, were, as to the Substance of them, well understood, and faithfully transmitted.
4. That Typical representations of the *Messiah* were suitable to the Majesty and Designs of God.
5. That these Methods were in several respects, most proper for the Preservation and Completion of the prophecies.

\* Ps. CX. 1.

1. Al-

I. Allegories have been much esteem'd amongst Learned and Polite Nations.

If we look back into *Egypt*, whose Schools of Learning are most renowned for curious Knowledge, as well as Antiquity, we shall find, that their choicest Doctrines, concerning the nature of God and Man, were involved in Allegorical and Typical representations. And here it was that *Moses*, by the special Providence of God, was adopted by *Pharaoh's* Daughter, and prepared by the best Education, which the whole World could give him, to undertake the Government and Instruction of his chosen People.

The alwise God condescended to approve the Learning then in Vogue, and taught the Sons of *Abraham* a Hieroglyphical Religion.

No wonder then, that *Pythagoras*, who gather'd his extensive Wisdom from *Judæa* and *Syria*, from *Egypt* and *Babylon*, wrapped it up in Symbols and Allegories, as the Vehicle at that time of all others the most palatable, and most likely to insinuate it into the Esteem and Memory of his numerous and noble Disciples.

It is true, the Poets gave too great a Loose to their Imaginations, and so blended their Theology and Philosophy with the Fabulous and the Marvelous, as to lose the Truths they intended to adorn, and to disguise the Traditions

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of

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of their wiser Ancestors with inconsistent representations. However, we may hence learn the Mode of the precedent Ages, which continued both in *Greece* and *Rome*, till Learning came to its greatest degree of Perfection.

*Virgil*, who is allowed to have refined upon the *Grecians*, and to have improved the *Roman* Taste to it's utmost Capacity, has given an irresistible Sanction to Allegory, when he \*expresses the greatest Revolution foretold in Prophecy in the Language we are speaking of.

The conduct of Providence is herein justly to be admired, that so Wise, so Celebrated, a Poet should thus recommend to all future Ages the noblest remains of the *ancient Sybils*, (as has been well proved by Learned Men;) and describe the great Change, that was just then going to be wrought by *the Son of God*, in the most polite Age, in the Metropolis of the World, almost in the very words of the *Jewish* Prophets. For, whilst he was without reason, and beyond measure, flattering the Infant Son of a *Roman* Consul, he was in reality preparing the World to expect a new State of Things, a new Age of Truth and Virtue, under the Conduct of the *Messiah*, whom he surprizingly styles (in words that cannot be render'd) *Magnum Jovis Incrementum*.

But all the use I need now make of it, is

\* *Eclog.* 4.

to

to shew, that Allegories have pleased Persons of the correctest Judgment among the Politest Nations.

2. Great and Important Truths were distinctly convey'd in this method.

One can hardly conceive, that Men of Learning and Wisdom should be pleased with Allegories, except they were capable of being distinctly understood: for nothing is so disagreeable to the Understanding as Darkness. Clear and distinct Ideas have always been most agreeable to Men of Reach and Penetration; only it was their peculiar Pleasure to see beyond that Veil, which they held before vulgar Eyes.

Whoever will take the pains to search into the valuable Fragments of ancient Learning, will find that there were no Truths of Moral or Natural Science, which they did not convey in Symbols and Hieroglyphical representations. There is enough left in *Horus Apollo*, (or what goes under his Name,) *Pierius*, and several other Authors, to convince any Man of the Truth of this Assertion.

The Omnipresence of God is finely shadowed in that celebrated *Symbol* ascribed to *Hermes Trismegistus*, a Circle, whose Centre is every where, and whose Circumference is no where.

The late Learned \* Astronomer of Oxford,

\* David Gregor.

D 3

who

who was no Visionary, but a profound Mathematician, pronounces, \*that by the *Harmony of the Spheres*, the *Samian* Philosopher understood, that the *Gravitation of the Planets to the Sun*, was reciprocally, as the *Squares of their Distances from him*.

It would be endless, to establish this Proposition by Examples. But it is certain, the Reputation of the Symbolical Philosophy could never have attracted the Eyes of the most piercing Wits, except the Notions were capable of being therein conveyed with Certainty and Fidelity; and this could not be done, unless the Alliance between Ideas and their Symbols had been fixed and determinate.

Some time indeed was required to learn this sacred Character: but then the Wisdom hid under it had something in it so sublime and sacred, that they Reverenced the very Language wherein it was taught. Whilst other talkative Philosophers were Wrangling and Disputing, they were silently admiring the profoundness of the Invention, and the safety of the Conveyance.

This method preserved the *Pythagoric* Doctrines, reduced to a determinate Sense and a narrow compass, entire and uncorrupt through many Ages. The Precepts of his *Religious Philosophy* were few and awful; and contributed much to refine the Manners of Men, and to

\* *Præfat. Astron. Phys.*

incite them to the Imitation of the Deity; and in a great measure prepared the Heathen World for the Instructions of that *Heavenly Teacher*, who hath shewed us the True way to Perfection and Happiness, \* and who opening his Mouth in *parables utter'd things, which had been kept Secret from the Foundation of the World.* † Who hath Ears to hear, let him hear.

But, whether Men will hear, or whether they will forbear, ‡ Wisdom is still justified of her Children.

3. The Prophecies concerning the *Messiah*, however Allegorical, as to the Substance of them, were well understood and faithfully transmitted.

Here it is much to be lamented, that we have not so complete a History of the *Exaltation* of the *Jews*, as this Subject deserves. But if the Stream appears at different Intervals uniform and increasing, (tho' not always above ground,) and at last running with a full Current; we may conclude, there was no interruption in the Conveyance; and that the hope of *Israel* was much ancients than the Captivity.

This, (if true,) will best account for the short hints we now find of things of the last importance: for, if they were then well ex-

\* Math. XIII. 35.

† v. 43.

‡ Math. XI. 19.  
plain'd

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plain'd and understood, the brevity of the Text might contribute to the more easy and perfect Remembrance of them.

I cannot but think, the word *Shiloh* was well known to express the *Messiah*. Otherwise it would be strange, that the circumstance of Time should be predicted, if the Person and Character of Him, *who was to come*, was entirely unknown.

This Knowledge was, (I presume,) much promoted by the Schools of the *Prophets*, who were chiefly employ'd in the Study of the Sacred Books, and in preparing themselves by Devotion and Music for the Illapses of the Holy Spirit; and, whenever they felt the Divine Impulse, they either recorded the wonderful Providence of God in Sacred Hymns or enforced the moral Precepts of their Law or gave a further Light to the foregoing Prophecies.

When the public Sins drew down upon the Nation public Calamities, it was their Custom to consult the Oracle of God, to look forwards with a steady Eye of Faith to the great Revolution, that was to happen *in the latter times*, and thence to give Comfort and Support to their distressed Kings and dejected People.

With this View, the abruptness of their Style and the loftiness of their Expressions, and great Beauties in the *Psalms* and the *Prophecies*

nd, without it, many remarkable Hymns and  
sermons in the Old Testament would fall  
vastly short of that Gravity, and Character of  
Wisdom, which undoubtedly belong to the  
Psalmist and the Preacher.

With this Key you open with a Masterly  
Command the Mysterious Conceptions and Ex-  
pressions of the Prophets; They then reassume  
their primitive Dignity, and are busy about the  
great things of God, which \* *the Angels desire*  
to look into. *Of which Salvation the Prophets*  
*have enquired, and searched diligently;* as St. † Pe-  
ter informs us.

The promised *Seed of Abraham*, the fountain  
of their Blessings; the *Son of David*, the *Son*  
*of Man*, the *Son of God*, the *Great King* of the  
*Jews*, were such endearing Characters of the  
*Messiah*, and so well understood in the times  
of the Prophets, that *He* is called by ‡ *Mala-*  
*chi, the Lord whom ye seek; the messenger of*  
*the Covenant, whom ye delight in.*

But nothing can better establish this Propo-  
sition, than to observe how many Characters  
of the *Messiah* were preserved entire, thro'  
many Years of Captivity and Ages of Corrup-  
tion, even till he made his public Appearance  
at *Jerusalem*. This likewise exhibits to us one  
signal Instance of the Wisdom of God's Pro-  
vidence in suffering his chosen People to so-

\* I Pet. I. 12.

† I. 10.

‡ III. Chap. v. 1.

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journe so long in Foreign Countries: for by this means the Knowledge of the One God was more widely propagated; and the Expectation of the *Messiah* spread over all the Eastern Countries.

It is observed by two \**Roman* Historians, that *there had prevailed all over the East an ancient and constant Opinion, that it was in the Fates* [or Prophecies,] *that about Vespasian's time, there should arise from Judea those, who should obtain the Empire of the World.*

Now so firm a persuasion could hardly have been *universally* entertain'd, without *Sacred* Authority to support it, and without an amiable Account of the *Monarchy*, to engage the Thoughts and Affections of the People. But the Advantages, expected from this Revolution, give us a good reason, why the *Jewish Prince* should be (as he is styled in the Prophecy † above mention'd) *The Desire of all Nations.*

It is certain, that the ‡ *Wise Men, who came from the East to Worship the Infant Messiah* in a Foreign Country, expected a King of an uncommon Character, and extensive Power. For what had they to do with the King of so small a Territory, as *Judea*, already govern'd by a Politic Prince supported by the Power of *Rome*? *The King of the Jews*, to whom they

\* Sueton. in Vita Vesp. cap. 4.

Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 13.

† Pag. 9.

‡ Math. II. 1, 2.

came to pay their Homage, must needs be that great King, of whom Ancient Prophecies had raised so universal an Expectation.

That Herod thus understood their Errand, is plain from the Question he put to the Men of Learning, *\*where the Messiah should be born?* And the ready Answer, which they return'd, shews that the Language and Meaning of the Prophets had been much consulted, and were well understood; † *in Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the Prophet, And thou Bethlehem in the Land of Juda art not the least among the Princes of Juda: for out of Thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.* And Herod could not more effectually shew his Belief of this Interpretation, than by his *absurd* and Diabolical Endeavour to defeat it.

That this Expectation was as commonly entertain'd in *Samaria*, is manifest from the Conference which *Jesus* held with the Woman at *Sychar*, who had this just Notion of the Messiah, ‡ *that He was coming*, and that *He could tell her all things*; and her Country-men, having heard him speak, acknowledg'd, that *\*\*He was indeed the Messiah*, that is, as they rightly understood it, *the Saviour of the World.*

*John* the Baptist knew, that the Messiah was †† *that Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sin of*

\* Matt. II. 4.

† v. 5, 6.

‡ Joh IV. 25.

\*\* v. 42.

†† Joh. I. 29.

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*the World.* When Philip met with Nathanael, he said unto him, \**we have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write* and Nathanael, upon conviction, shews he had been no stranger to his Character, saying unto Jesus, †*Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel.*

It was well known among the *Jews*, that the *Messiah* should have an uncommon Original and be able to do many Miracles; ††*When the Messiah cometh, no Man knoweth, whence he is* — ‡*when the Messiah cometh, will he do more miracles, than these which this Man hath done*

They understood his *eternal Priesthood*, and were much offended, when he talked of his future Sufferings; \*\**we have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever*; and how saidst thou, the Son of Man must be lifted up? What is this Son of Man? Is this another Son of Man?

All which, and much more of the same nature which might be added, will abundantly prove, that the Language of the Prophets was well understood; and that the Allegories, and Secondary meanings, were faithfully transmitted and that the Prophecies relating to the *Messiah*, as to the Substance of them, were intelligible to the *unprejudiced part of the People.*

\* Joh. I. 45    † v. 49.    †† Joh. VII. 27.    ‡ v. 30.  
\*\* Joh. XII. 34.

4. Typical Representations of the *Messiah* were suitable to the *Majesty* and *Designs* of God.

The Creator *stamped* on the World an *Image* of Himself; and expects that by this *Type*, Men should trace out the Nature of the Deity, and confess his Greatness and their own Obligations.

This is the Doctrine of Holy *Paul*, and is acknowledged by the greatest Philosophers. \**That, which may be known of God, is manifest in them; For God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.*

To delineate in like manner by several Types and prefigurements the Condition, the Nature, the Offices, the Actions, the Sufferings, the Victories, the Triumphs, and the Gifts, of the great Redeemer, is such a *Majestic* way of Representation, as could only have God for it's Author, and *Messiah* for it's Subject.

The whole Temple-Service seems contrived to preserve in the Minds of the *Jews* a Notion of that *Great Sacrifice*, which was to be offered in due time for the Sins of the World; and that remarkable Type of the *Paschal Lamb* strangely represented, and exactly exhibited, that

\* Rom. I. 19, 20.

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*Lamb of God, which was intentionally <sup>a</sup> slain from the foundation of the World.*

The very Order of Prophets was a sort of Type of *that great Prophet*, who should arise amongst them, and perfectly reveal the whole Will of God.

The particulars of the *Jewish History* are so chosen by Divine Appointment, that there is scarce a Patriarch, a Judge, a King, a Prophet, or a Ruler, who does not bear some Typical Representation of the *Messiah*.

Their Books of *Hymns* are every where so crowded with Prefigurements of his Nature and Exploits; of his Offices of King, Priest, and Prophet; that they are perpetual Delineations of Him and his Church, and such as could only be deliver'd by the Allseeing Spirit of God.

Here we may behold Him in every posture of Humiliation and Exaltation; <sup>b</sup> *the reproach of Men, and despised of the People*; <sup>c</sup> *poured out like water*; <sup>d</sup> *compassed with Heathen Dogs*; *with hands and feet pierced*; <sup>e</sup> *his garments parted among them, and lots cast upon his Vesture*; <sup>f</sup> *brought into the dust of Death*; yet a <sup>g</sup> *Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek*; <sup>h</sup> *begotten again from the Grave*, <sup>i</sup> *without seeing Corruption*;

<sup>a</sup> Rev. XIII. 8.      <sup>b</sup> Psal. XXII. 6.      <sup>c</sup> v. 14.      <sup>d</sup> v. 16.  
<sup>e</sup> v. 18.      <sup>f</sup> v. 15.      <sup>g</sup> Psal. CX. 4.      <sup>h</sup> Psal. II. 7.  
<sup>i</sup> Psal. XVI. 10.

\* *having*

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having the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for his Possession; †Ascending up on High; leading Captivity Captive; receiving Gifts for Men, that the Lord God might dwell among them. ‡As King of Glory, entering into Heaven's Everlasting doors; \*\*& Sitting upon the Throne of his Holiness.

I give you too Contracted a View of that Typical Delineation of the *Messiah*, which fills every Devout Person with Admiration and Transport, and is so suitable to the Majesty and Designs of God; serving to reveal *Him* to those, who Meditated on the sacred Volume of his *Laws*, who relied upon his *Promises*, and were conversant in his *Temple*; and at the same time preserving these Mysteries from Contempt, by concealing them in some measure from those, who ridiculed all things *Sacred* and *Religious*.

†† *It is the Glory of God, says the wisest of Men, to conceal a thing: but the Honour of Kings is to search out a matter.*

This Royal Philosopher and Preacher was a great admirer of, and proficient in, the Enigmatical Learning; which was so much esteemed in the Eastern Countries, that Crowned Heads did not think it below them to listen

\* Psal. II. 8.    † Psal. LXVIII. 18.    ‡ Psal. XXIV. 9.  
\*\* Psal. XLVII. 8.    †† Prov. XXV. 2.

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to such profound Wisdom, or even to Travel for such delicate Entertainment.

As the Mathematical Sciences are now justly valued in the wisest Nations, and Questions of this nature are frequently sent from one Kingdom to another for Solution: so in ancient times Ænigmas & Typical Problems were proposed by Men of Renown; and a Facility in resolving them was thought a great intellectual Accomplishment.

Every Age has its Taste; and it suited as well the Goodness, as Majesty, of God, to teach Mankind in the way, they most esteemed. This raised their Curiosity, gratified their Inclination, preserved the Prophetic Promises, and every way answer'd the Designs of God.

5. These Methods were in several respects most proper for the Preservation, and Completion of the Prophecies.

The *Jews*, as appears from their own History, were a very Carnal and Stubborn race of Men, who rebelled against that Divine Power, which presided over them in so peculiar a manner, without any Reason or foundation of Complaint. And though they were very faithful in preserving the Divine Revelations, whilst they obey'd the Precepts therein contain'd; yet, no sooner did they relapse to Disobedience and

and Idolatry, but they neglected the Copies of that Law which bore Witness against them.

But, when the Promises of a *Great Prince* and Deliverer were open'd to their View, this often rais'd their Spirits, and promoted the due Reverence of their Sacred Writings. They readily entertain'd the Ideas of a *Powerful Saviour*, who should confound their Enemies, and rule them with a rod of Iron. But had they thoroughly understood, that the *Messiah* would come to reform their Manners, to subdue their Pride, and to teach them Humility and Patience, it is much to be question'd, whether their Holy Books had been so faithfully transmitted to Posterity. Had they clearly foreseen, that the *Messiah* should have been put to an ignominious Death by *Heathen* Soldiers, they probably would not have been so punctual in their Tradition, nor so eager in their Expectation.

So that the Partial Concealment and Veiling of these disagreeable Circumstances was useful to keep up their Hopes; and the throwing some part of His Character into a *Shade* might contribute to preserve it from Contempt, and to defend the Prophetical Books from *Interpolation* and *Corruption*.

By this means the *Evidences* of the Christian Religion were preserved by those, who proved it's most inveterate Enemies; and the Christians  
were

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were hereby entirely freed from all possible Suspicion of having adulterated the *Divine Oracles*.

As this Method of Divine Providence guarded the Prophecies from Abuses and Corruptions, so it greatly facilitated the Completion of them, on which the whole Oeconomy of our Salvation entirely depended.

For had it been plainly revealed, that *Jesus* the Son of *Mary*, born at *Bethlehem*, bred under a Carpenter in *Nazareth*, should be the *Messiah*, the promised King of the *Jews*; such is the Pride of one Man, the Envy of another, the Jealousy of a third, the Hardiness of a fourth, the Corruptness of all, that it would have been impossible, without a Series of Miracles, and a Total overthrow of Human Liberty, to have preserved Him from his Nativity to his Manhood, in so perverse and wicked a Generation. What Jealousies, what Contentions, what Seditions, would have arisen amongst *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, *Jews* and *Samaritans*, Scribes and Lawyers, *Herodians* and Libertines, Priests and Princes, if the Time, Place, and every other Circumstance relating to the *Appearance* of this divine Person had been named, or described in the most Express and Literal manner?

We see how great Destruction the Jealousy of *Herod* brought upon the Infants of *Bethlehem*.

them, because it was believed, that That was the Place, where the *Messiah* should be born.

And from this one Example we may judge of a thousand ill Consequences, that would certainly have followed, had this been the constant Method of Designation.

As some degree of Obscurity was useful to exercise the Industry and Faith of honest Enquirers; so it was serviceable to the Executing of the Decrees of God, and the Fulfilling of those Prophecies, which declare, that the *Messiah* should be \* *wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities.*

It is in some measure owing to these Typical Delineations, as well as to the narrow Policy of the *Princes of this World*, which hinder'd them from discerning the *hidden Wisdom* and Counsel of God, that *the Messiah* † *bare the Sins of many, and was number'd with the Transgressors.* For, had they known it, they would not dare to have Crucified the Lord of Glory.

So that we may safely conclude, that the Typical and Allegorical manner of Painting out some *circumstances* of the *Messiah*, contributed to the Preservation and Completion of the Prophecies; and therefore was the best and most commodious for Mankind.

I come now very briefly to conclude

\* *Isai. LIII. 5.* † *v. 12.* ‡ *1 Cor. II. 8.*

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III. That the Harmony and Consent of Prophecies Literal, Typical, and Allegorical, deliver'd by Holy Men of God, in different Ages of the World, and of different Methods of Life, was the most *complete* and most *divine* Intimation and Description of the *Messiah*, that could have been given to Mankind.

We cannot conceive a more Noble or more Proper way of Introducing the *Son of God*, the Restorer of Truth and Righteousness, into the World, than by preparing Mankind by predictions and representations of various Forms, in different Ages, by Men of different Methods of Life, to expect and entertain *Him*; by exciting their Curiosity, and giving still new and more enlarged Prospects of the Grandeur, and Dignity, and Offices of that Person, who was to make so Divine a Figure on the Theatre of the World.

If the principal Intent of his coming was made known to our first Parents in Paradise; if the Design was more fully explain'd to *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, so that *He saw his Day and rejoiced*; if his Prophetic Office was plainly and literally foretold by *Moses*, who gave the noblest Proofs of his being taken in to Familiarity with God, and whose Wisdom was famed through all the World; if the N

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ture of his *Kingdom*, and the Extent of his *Church* are magnificently set forth by *David* and *Solomon*, Men renowned for their Power, \* whose name went far unto the Islands; if his Nature and Offices are both Allegorically described and Typically represented by succeeding Prophets, without any Contradiction to former Prophecies, and with a more ample and distinct Unfolding of them; if the whole Train of this great Design is so graphically Painted, as to affect in the most lively manner the minds of Men in every Faculty and Capacity; if no Method of Description or Adumbration is omitted, which might either enlighten the Understanding, or captivate the Affections; if Wise and Good Men in different Ages of the World, agree with, and are subservient to, each other in their Representations; if Men of diverse Education and Professions, without any Consultation with one another, paint out this Great Redeemer in his various Lineaments and Characters; if the Courtier, and the Shepherd, the Man of Learning, and the Man of Power, according to their different ways of Thinking and Speaking, give one consistent Resemblance and perfect Image of this Divine Person: We must acknowledge, that this is the most *complete*, the most proper, and the most *divine* Designation of Him; the most incapable of Fraud and Conspiracy, the most

\* Ecclus. XLVII. 16.

Safe and Satisfactory, that could be contrived; and such as could not enter into the Heart of Man to devise, nor be within the Reach of all created Beings to accomplish.

If the time, place, and other particulars relating to his great Undertaking, and All-sufficient Sacrifice, were for many Ages before either directly foretold, or obliquely represented; if so many Circumstances depending on the Will of *Jews* and *Romans*, and entirely subject to the Direction of Divine Providence, were clearly and distinctly marked out: this must be confessed to be so Uncommon, so Unprecedented, and so Inimitable, that it neither has nor can have, from Humane Power, any Parallel.

So that *St. Peter* might well say, in the words I have chosen for the Subject of this Discourse, *We have also a more, or most sure Word of Prophecy.* A Testimony, that will stand the Examination of all Ages; a Foundation, that will bear the Weight of the whole Christian Fabric; it is a firm, constant, and lasting Proof, that wants no Witnesses to vouch for it, but it's Counterpart, the History of *Jesus Christ*; and appeals to the Reason and Judgment of the whole World for its *Truth* and *Sufficiency*.

I hope, I have now performed what I at first proposed; and, as far as the narrow limits  
of

of a single Discourse would well allow, have shewn, that

*The Proofs of the Christian Religion are not all Typical or Allegorical;*

And that *Typical and Allegorical Prophecies are much more valid and convincing, than our Adversary has represented.*

It would now be very proper to consider how unfairly He has treated the *Citations* from the Old Testament, and the *Illustrations* of the Primitive Fathers of the Church; and to restore them to their proper Light and Dignity. But this would engage us further, than the Time will permit.

I shall therefore pass them by at the present, as well as the Argument from the *Great Miracles* done by our Saviour, and the Power of doing greater communicated to his Apostles: which abundantly demonstrate, that they acted by a Commission from God; and give them the greatest Authority to explain the extensive Meaning of those *Prophecies*, which, being dictated by the *Holy Spirit of God*, are of no private Original, or Interpretation; especially in such Parts, as were designedly *obscure*, and were wisely left to the infallible Exposition of the same Divine Spirit, that was the Author of them.

I might, perhaps more properly, go on to shew the Completion of those many remarkable

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able Prophecies, which were left us by *Jesus Christ*, and have been punctually fulfilled in their Order: for this is also a confirming Proof of the Truth of his Religion, and a most Sure way of Prophecy. For, whether we look backward or forwards, all is Uniform; \* *the Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.*

But I shall only press the Commendation of *St. Peter* to Imitation; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light, that shines in a dark place: Much application to the Study of the Prophetic Style being necessary to a full Comprehension of the manifold Wisdom of God.

Since then we are continually refer'd to *Moses* and *the Prophets*; since these are the Books in which the Substance of our Religion was before the Coming of *Jesus* contain'd, and of which the New Testament is a Commentary since the Conversion of the *Jews*, which is one of the noblest Ends a Christian can pursue must depend on the perfect Knowledge of the Old Testament; and since the *Christian* Religion is so openly attack'd thro' the sides of the *Jewish*: let us manfully advance in the Study and Vindication of the *Holy Writings* in Defence of the *Messiah*, and of those *Holy Men of God*, who were Honour'd with Divine Revelations concerning Him.

\* Revel. XIX. 10.

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*Daniel, a Person greatly beloved of God*, had the most precise Discoveries concerning the Times of the *Messiah's* Advent and Sufferings; and *John, the Beloved Disciple*, had the most enlarged Views of the Christian Church.

It must therefore be very acceptable to God, and very honourable for our Selves, to understand *the Prophetic Language*; and to search, with Modesty and Diligence, into the Full meaning of Divine Revelations: which happy Consequence, I hope, the pernicious Book of our Adversary will in some measure occasion.

Providence permits Disbelievers and Heretics to arise, that Believers may be tried, and bear Witness to the Truth. We need not therefore be much concern'd, that *Infidels* and *Apostates* are openly allowed to attack the Religion of *Jesus Christ*: for It will stand the Test of all Ages, and shine the Brighter for being Tried.

The Study of the *Prophecies* had perhaps been too much neglected. So that this Zealous Opposition may *providentially* be of great Service to the Christian Church, and promote a more accurate Understanding of the *Prophetic Writings*.

In the mean Time may *the God of Truth* bless our Enquiries, and make us Successful in those Labours, which tend to His Honour and Glory.

T H E E N D.



